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ABSTRACT

Annotated citations in this bibliography are divided into two sections: (1) statistical studies concerning the impact of divorce on students, and (2) diagnostic studies and suggested strategies for dealing with the issue of marital separation and divorce and their effects in the classroom. A glossary of terms, a summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations are offered. (RH)

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AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE LITERATURE DEALING WITH THE IMPACT OF DIVORCE UPON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT, SELF-CONCEPT, AND BEHAVIORAL CHANGES OF CHILDREN OF DIVORCE AND THE DIAGNOSIS OF AND STRATEGIES FOR ALLEVIATINGTHE NEGATIVE SYMPTOMS OF DIVORCE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study	3
Organization of the Study	4
Limitation of the Study	5
Glossary	6
ANNOTATIONS	
Studies	8
Diagnosis and Strategies	23
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	35
Summary	35
Conclusion	43
Recommendations	46
BIBLIOGRAPHY	47
STUDENT QUALIFICATIONS	52

INTRODUCTION

Family configurations have changed radically in the United States in recent decades. Whereas single parent households were once a small minority of this country's population, such is not the case today. "Currently, the divorce rate in this country is the highest recorded anywhere with about half the marriages ending in divorce. Nearly 50% of the children now being born will live in a single parent household before the age of eighteen." (Garvin, 1984:6). According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Census, it is estimated that 45% of all children born in this country today will spend at least one year living with only one parent. (Patten-Seward, 1984:152).

With the increase in divorce come the complicating effects of stress engendered by the crisis of divorce. Those effects are keenly felt by the children of divorce. It is only natural that when a child must spend a substantial portion of his/her day in the educational environment, those stresses and concerns of the home will be in attendance at school. With statistics suggesting that approximately 50% of all students will go through the traumatic experience of divorce, there will, of necessity, be an effect upon the academic setting. Teachers have involuntarily become involved in the divorce trauma as they must work with these

children of divorce and deal with the impact that marital separation has upon the academic and social performance of their students.

Researchers have not been unanimous regarding the effects of divorce upon children. Hammond, for example, found no significant difference in self-concept, math and reading achievement, immaturity or withdrawal between students from intact families and those whose parents had divorced. (Hammond, 1979). Other researchers reported that some chldren even realized positive benefits when the stress of parental hostility was eliminated by divorce. "They (the children of divorce) also may have highly developed strengths in explaining feelings, evaluating and understanding relationships, skills in managing conflict and mastering disappointments, experience in assuming responsibility and character traits of independence and resilience." (Garvin, 1984:6). Despite the possibility of some positive effects being realized, the majority of research indicates that divorce has some detrimental effects upon most children who experience it. Therefore, the teachers of these children are, in turn, affected as they attempt to deal with the adverse symptoms in the classroom.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Scholastic Aptitude Test scores have shown a continuous decline over the past 14 years. The report from an

independent panel commissioned by the College Entrance Examination Board to find out why....points to the recent increase in one-parent families as one of the societal factors possibly responsible for this trend." (Black, 1979:24). A high degree of stress from whatever cause, will almost certainly affect children's behavior and ability to perform in the classroom. Allers noted that the teacher may observe any or all of the following symptoms in children undergoing the type of stress caused by the breakup of their parents' marriage: absentmindedness, nervousness, weariness, moodiness, withdrawal, declining grades, acting out, and physical complaints. (Allers, 1980:26, 28). If the educator is to educate the child, there must be an awareness of those factors which influence the child's academic performance and social behavior. Additionally, strategies must be developed to combat the negative and enhance the positive effects of divorce upon students so that the educational process can continue with minimal interruption.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

With the increasing number of students who are daily attempting to come to terms with the dissolution of their parents' marriage and trying to gain equilibrium in their own view of themselves and their role in the scheme of things, the teacher has a greater opportunity to assist these students as they struggle through the trauma of divorce. By

becoming alert to the symptoms of such stress that may be manifested in the classroom and being acquainted with strategies that will aid the student in successfully managing the stress, teachers will be able to function as educators for the approximately 50% of their students who will be touched by the experience of marital separation. This study deals with the identification of such symptoms and the integration of teaching strategies into the classroom environment to maximize the learning potential of children of divorce.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The focus of this study has been to identify ways in which the teacher may assist the child of divorce in coping with the trauma of the breakup of his/her parents' marriage. To accomplish this, research data has been gathered which will help to identify the symptoms associated with divorce that relate to (1) academic performance, (2) emotional adjustment, (3) self-concept, and (4) behavioral changes. Additionally, sources have been gathered which suggest strategies for dealing with the effects of divorce as it is observed in the classroom.

The introductory portion of the paper analyzes statistical studies of the impact of divorce upon the child's classroom performance. Because of the interrelationship of academic performance, emotional adjustment, self-concept, and

behavior in the classroom, there is, of necessity, an overlapping of these subjects in the research presented. There follows specific, pragmatic strategies for alleviating the aforementioned symptoms. The annotations are divided into two sections: (1) the statistical studies relating to the impact of divorce upon the student; and, (2) diagnostic studies and suggested strategies for dealing with the issue of marital separation and its effects in the classroom. Each of the annotation sections is arranged in alphabetical order. Finally, conclusions are presented regarding the reasonable expectations of the teacher in dealing with this childhood crisis.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited by the fact that research in this area has been relatively scant until recent years. The authors of the NAESP report of 1979 stated that before the report of their findings, there had been no systematic, large-scale collection of data. (NAESP Staff Report, 1979). While research has been somewhat limited in this area to date, information valuable to the teacher for helping children to cope with divorce has been gleaned. More research on academic achievement needs to be done to ascertain whether or not other variables such as the sex of the child, age, family income, etc. account for some of the effects that were measured. As this is done, perhaps more precise strategies will be developed.

GLOSSARY

achievement, academic -- "knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects, usually designated by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers, or by both." (Good 1973:7)

acting out -- "aggressive or hostile attitudes, talking out, talking back, rearranging funiture, restlessness, etc." (Campbell and Miller 1982:25)

case study -- "an analysis of the origin of individual and family problems and of the methods used in counseling; generic term for individualized counseling methods which utilize cumulative records or other collection of all available evidence - social, psychological, physiological, biographical, environmental, vocational - that promises to help explain a single individual or a single social unit such as a family." (Good 1973:81)

I/D/E/A -- "The Institute for Development of Educational Activity." [The National Elementary Principal, 59(1979):12]

intact nuclear family -- "family consisting of children and natural father and mother living together." (Lindholm and Toriliatos 1980:265)

NAESP -- "National Association of Elementary School Principals." [The National Elementary Principal, 59(1979):12]

NCCE -- "National Committee for Citizens in Education." [The National Elementary Principal, 59(1979):76]

self-concept -- "the attitude and feeling a child has concerning him/herself." (Raschke 1979:369)

self-esteem -- "a more or less phenomenal process in which the person perceives characteristics of him/herself and reacts to those characteristics emotionally or behaviorally." (Raschke 1979:369)

single parent family -- "a family consisting of children living with one parent or guardian as a result of death, divorce, or separation. This also includes children living with mothers who have never been married." (DiSilvio 1981:3)

socioeconomic background -- "the background or environment indicative of both the social and economic status of an individual or group." (Good 1973:542)

stereotype -- "a fixed standardized conception of the attributes of a class of persons or social values that is not readily modified by evidence of its falsity." (Good 1973:558)

study, longitudinal -- "a study that follows a case or group of cases over a period of time; includes genetic study, follow-up studies, growth studies, and experimental growth studies; its purpose may be to gather normative data on growth, to plot trends (as of attitudes) or to observe the effects of special factors (as in an experiment)" (Good 1973:565)

underachiever -- "a person who falls below his capacity in school achievement." (Good 1973:628)

ANNOTATIONS

STUDIES RELATING TO THE IMPACT OF DIVORCE UPON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT, SELF-CONCEPT, AND BEHAVIORAL CHANGES OF CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

Black, Kathryn Norcross, "What About the Child from a One-Parent Home?" Teacher, 96 (1979): 24-26, 28.

As a possible result of the increasing divorce rate and the number of one-parent families, Scholastic Aptitude Test scores have shown a continuous decline over the past fourteen years. Black contended that educators will have to be ready to deal with the intellectual and psychological development of these children. Black noted a 1975 study of five- to ten-year-old children in a particular school system. They found that children from divorced or separated families had a greater intensity of problems. This was in contrast to children who had a parent die. Children of divorce were more withdrawn and depressed. Schools should be careful not to interpret all problems as being a result of divorce, but to look at other factors, such as learning disability, also. The school can help children who are facing the trauma of divorce in several different ways. First, in order to help the child, the parents must be helped. Schools should be able to offer information about possible resources for help to the parents. Second, the school needs to help the child. Let the child know that what he/she is feeling is understandable and accept his/her emotions. Dealing openly with feelings is also a big help to a distressed child.

Cantor, Dorothy, "Divorce: A View from the Children," Journal of Divorce. 4 (1979): 357-361.

Cantor, while citing the work of Kelly and Wallerstein, emphasized the importance of establishing groups in the elementary school for children of divorce. She stated, "During the preseparation period much goes on between the couple, of which the children are presumed to be ignorant. Because the children are ostensibly not privy to the marital disharmony, they have not opportunity to discuss the anxiety that it provokes." (p. 357). Because of the confusion of the situation, according to Kelly and Wallerstein, this confusion interferes with their ability to cope with the crisis. A play was written by a third grade boy who was a member of a school's separation and divorce group. The play showed parents that their children were not ignorant of the very serious disruption in the family environment. As a result of an ongoing longitudinal study of divorce and later latentcy children, Kelly and Wallerstein pointed out that some defences used by these children were: denial, courage, bravado, seeking support from others, keeping in motion, and conscious avoidance. Many of these defences were evident in the play. Cantor encouraged all professionals to deal immediately with the effects of divorce on children when one is in the process.

Courtney, Dan and Schell, Leo M., "The Effect of Male Teachers on the Academic Achievement of Father-Absent Sixth Grade Boys," Journal of Educational Research, 72 (1979): 194-195.

Low academic achievers are found among boys whose fathers are absent for one reason or another. The absence could be because of death, separation, or divorce. This study was done to see whether or not male teachers had an effect on the academic achievement of father-absent sixth grade boys. Subjects were chosen from a large Midwestern city. 195 father-absent boys were selected for the study. Of these, 90 had been assigned to 40 male teachers during their sixth grade year and 103 had been assigned to 46 female teachers. Five total subtest scores from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills - Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Language, Work Study, and Mathematics - served as both pre-test and post-test measures. They were administered in April of the fifth and sixth grade years. Additionally, intelligence quotients were taken from the total score of the Short Form Test of Academic Aptitude which was administered in April of the boys' fifth grade year. Results of these tests indicated that male teachers had no significant effect upon the academic achievement of these boys. In fact, the total Language score was significantly in favor of the boys assigned to female teachers.

DiSilvio, Robert A., The Effects of the Single-Parent Family on Academic, Emotional, and Social Achievement of the Elementary School Child, Educational Resources Information Center, ED 226825, 1981.

In comparing the academic achievement of single-parent families and intact families, the findings were contradictory. Some of the research showed that academic performance is impaired to some degree as a result of divorce and separation. Other research, however, showed that academic achievement might be impaired by other variables, such as the sex of the child, or family income. One study showed that high income, one-parent girls had higher academic achievement than boys from lower income, intact families. Emotional behaviors were evident in children who have recently experienced divorce. Some emotions were guilt, aggression, "acting out," mourning, and often a deterioration in the parent-child relationship. The child's emotional adjustment will be determined by the nature and quality of the new family environment. Certain social behaviors were also seen. These behaviors include seeking attention from the teacher, more visits to the nurse, more dependence on adults, higher rates of absences, tardiness, and truancy. Research also has shown that boys will show more aggression and "acting out" behaviors than girls who have just experienced divorce.

Doering, William G., Is Life in a One-Parent Family Damaging to Children? A Look at Both Sides, Educational Resources Information Center, ED 193546, March 1980.

Doering presented both sides to the issue of divorce and its effects upon children. Studies have shown that children from divorced families exhibit more acting out behaviors in the classroom. Also, at the time of divorce children showed sadness and yearning. Teachers see a higher percentage of restlessness, sighing, and lower creativity in children whose parents are divorced. Studies also showed lower academic performance in the form of lower cognitive performances and lower grade points for these students. Boys' behaviors seem to be criticized more by teachers, parents, and peers when their parents are divorced. Girls from divorced families showed a higher percentage of dropping out of school and early childbearing. Some studies have shown, however, that children are better off in a one-parent situation than in an unhappy, intact family situation. Some parents said that relationships with their children were enhanced after the divorce. Other studies showed no lower achievement than that among peers from intact families.

Drake, Ellen A., "Children of Separation and Divorce: School Policies, Procedures, Problems," Phi Delta Kappan, 63 (1981): 27-28.

Drake stated that 20% of the school enrollment is made up of children from separated or divorced parents. Decisions regarding retention, many times, must be made by teachers because of the academic difficulties a child may face during this period. The following is an example of a second-grader's SRA Achievement Series Skills profile taken right after a divorce and custody struggle: The child was in the 91st percentile in reading in the second grade; in the third grade, the 84th percentile. In the fourth grade, however, the score went up to the 98th percentile. The composite scores and language art scores were comparable to the reading scores in their fluctuation. The math score did not go up in the fourth grade, going from an 85 in the second; to 70 in the third; and to 64 in the fourth because during this interval of stress the child missed essential math skills. Children with divorced parents were also found to be more prone to visit the school nurse and be absent from school more than children from intact families.

Evans, Al, and Neel, John, "School Behaviors of Children from One-Parent and Two-Parent Homes," Principal, 60-61 (1980): 38-39.

The question as to whether school behaviors of children from one-parent homes differ from those of children from two-parent homes was addressed by the NAESP-/I/S/E/A/Consortium for the Study of School Needs of Children from One-Parent Families. The data given was analyzed at Georgia State University using a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) discriminant analysis. Three different tables were presented in the article. The first was a breakdown of students by population by semester, family types, and school level. The second table presented the means for each of the variables studied during the 1979-80 school year. Table three indicated which variables were significantly different for the two-parent and one-parent children's behaviors. If the two-parent and one-parent means were significantly different at the .05 level on the Tukey test, then a significant difference was indicated. "The major finding of this statistical analysis is tht 25 of 29 measures of school behavior of two-parent and one-parent family children are significantly different at the .05 level, with two-parent children adhering more closely to school expectations." (p. 39).

Guidubaldi, John, (and others), "The Impact of Parental Divorce on Children," School Psychology Review, 12 (1983): 300-323.

144 psychologists from 38 states agreed to participate in a study of the impact of parental divorce on children. Each evaluator selected an elementary school and then selected a group of six children for the study. Three of the six were from intact families and three from a divorced family. A total of 358 children from intact families and 341 from divorced families participated in this study. The instruments used to assess intellectual potential, academic achievement, and social behaviors were the WISC-R, WRAT, psychologists ratings, teacher ratings, interviews, and standardized tests. Social competence measures included the Hahnemann Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale (HESB). Results showed that intact family children performed better on 14 of the 16 Hahnemann classroom behavior ratings. They were absent less often and were more popular with their peers. Also, higher IQ, reading, and spelling scores were found. Other results showed that girls consistently show better adjustment patterns than boys. They were less likely to have repeated a grade. Intact family boys performed better than divorced family boys on a number of measures. First graders showed far fewer adverse effects than fifth graders.

Hammond, Janice M., "Children of Divorce: A Study of Self-Concept, Academic Achievement, and Attitudes," The Elementary School Journal, 80 (1979): 55-61.

The population for this study consisted of children in Grades 3-6 attending two elementary schools in a lower-middle class suburban community. The study used 165 students - 82 from divorce, 83 from non-divorce. Data was collected in 1978 for the study. Teachers helped provide information on reading and math achievement and completed Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklists on each student. Students also took the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale. As a result of her study, Hammond found no significant difference in self-concept, math and reading achievement, immaturity or withdrawal. Teachers, however, rated behavioral problems of boys much higher in a divorce setting. Such things as "acting out" and distractibility were more noticable. Additionally, boys from divorce had lower ratings in math achievement and they said their families were less happy. Hammond felt that boys may be reacting more than girls in a divorce because 79% of these children lived with the mother, indicating that boys at this age exhibit more symptoms related to the loss of a father than girls.

Hetherington, Mavis E., "Divorce: A Child's Perspective," American Psychologist, 34 (1979): 851-858.

Hetherington compiled in one article various research studies on divorce and its effects on the child. The most common responses to divorce are anger, fear, depression, and guilt. Some children will be able to emerge from a stressful divorce as well-functioning individuals while others cannot. A tempermentally difficult child will be less able to adapt to change and more vulnerable to adversity than a tempermentally easy child. The child's age will also influence how a child reacts to the divorce. A young child is likely to be more self-blaming than an older child. The impact of divorce is also more pervasive and enduring for boys than for girls. It was suggested that this might be because the loss of a father is more stressful for boys than girls. "In addition, boys receive less positive support and nurturance and are viewed more negatively by mothers, teachers, and peers in the period immediately following divorce than girls." (p.853). Research has also shown that one of the most prevalent stresses confronting children of divorce are those associated with downward economic mobility. Even though there are problems, research has shown that children in single-parent families fare better than children in conflict-ridden, intact families.

Jacobson, Doris S., "The Impact of Marital Separation/Divorce On Children," Journal of Divorce, 4 (1978): 341-360.

This study was designed to find the impact of marital separation/divorce on children between the ages of three and 17 during a 12-month period after the marital separation occurred. A sample of 30 families including 51 children, all of whom had experienced a marital separation in the 12-month period previous to the first research interview was chosen. Data was collected by interviewing the child and the parent with whom the child was living. Two different research instruments were used in collecting the data: the Time Spent Form (TSF), and the Louisville Behavior Checklist (LBCL). The study concluded that there was a statistically significant association between time lost with father and a child's adjustments. The more time lost with father, the higher the maladjustment score in the areas of aggression, inhibition, and cognitive disability. Also, related to time lost with father, findings showed that children experience more hyperactivity, social withdrawal, fear, and irritability. No significant relationships between mother presence or mother activity and adjustment were found.

Kealey, Robert J., "The Image of the Family in Second-Grade Readers," Momentum, 11 (1980): 16-19.

Six basal reading series were chosen for a study to investigate the image of the family. The basals studied were published in 1978 and after. Two questions were asked by the researchers: (1) What were the types of families presented in the basal readers? and, (2) How many stories of each type were there in the readers? Of the 136 basal reading stories dealing with family, only one story specifically stated that one of the child's parents did not live at home. In both text and art work, the other parent was ignored in 51 out of the 52 stories dealing with single parents. "It is possible that these stories may be communicating rejection of the child on the part of the parent not living at home. The disregard for the other parent in over 98% of the single-parent stories may have greater significance than the fact that the child lives in a one-parent family." (p. 17). Also, in the basal reader stories mention was never made of deceased or divorced parents. Schools were encouraged to be very selective about what basal series they choose. Schools should make sure basals and values of the school correspond to one another.

Kelly, Joan B., and Wallerstein, Judith S., "Children of Divorce," The National Elementary Principal, 59 (1979): 51-58.

The following were the results of a five-year longitudinal study of 60 northern California divorcing families and their 131 children, aged three to 18 at the time of the marital separation: about two-thirds of all the children showed notable changes in school following their parents' separation; half of the students showed high levels of anxiety in the form of restlessness; one-quarter of the youngsters had severe difficulty concentrating on schoolwork; there was a substantial increase in daydreaming; one-fifth of the students showed considerable sadness or depression; and there was a decline in academic achievement in one-fifth of the students during the several months following the separation. Some of the students retained their ability to function academically. Not only did a child's academic performance change but, in many cases, so did a child's social life. One child was noted as becoming increasingly irritable and starting many fights on the playground. The authors felt that the school should be a support system for these children. There must also be curriculum and attitude changes and perhaps after-school care for working mothers. In many areas adult education programs dealing with different aspects of divorce have been helpful.

Lindholm, Bryon W. and Toriliatos, John, "Teacher's Perceptions of Behavior Problems in Children From Intact, Single-Parent and Stepparent Families," Psychology in the Schools, 17 (1980): 264-269.

A study was done to examine the difference in the incidences of behavior problems between children living with stepparent, single-parent, and in natural families. Subjects were 3,644 white children enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade in a Houston, Texas suburban school district. Of these, 2,991 children were living with both natural parents; 312 with the biological mother only; 43 with the biological father only; 264 with the natural mother and stepfather; and 34 with the natural father and stepmother. Data included background information and ratings on Quay's Behavior Problem Checklist. Ratings were on Conduct Problems, Personality Problems, Inadequacy-Immaturity, Socialized Delinquency, and Psychotic Signs. Results showed that children living with mothers only had more problems checked on all five scales of the checklist as compared to children from intact families. Those with father only showed more Socialized Delinquency. Those with mother and stepfather showed more Conduct Problems and Socialized Delinquency. Children living with father and stepmother showed more Conduct Problems.

McCall, Robert B. and Gilliam, Gwendolyn, "Divorce Doesn't Stop at Home," Day Care and Early Education, 9-10 (1980): 57-60.

Research conducted by Dr. Mary Beth Shinn has shown that divorce and any absence of a father can have harmful effects upon a child's intellectual growth. These children are behind academically, sometimes as much as a year, with problems especially noticeable in quantitative and problem-solving areas. Research has also shown that children of divorce adjust faster to the situation if the father continues to have an active and caring involvement with their children. Boys from divorced homes tend to be more disobedient and hostile. They are less happy, less affectionate, less caring, less smiling, and less cooperative. Two years after the divorce, however, research has shown that the social behavior of boys improves. Girls show somewhat the same reaction to divorce as boys, but less severely. The authors gave several ways that the schools can help children from divorced homes. (1) Maintain sufficient contact with the parents. (2) Be flexible and understand the plight of a single parent. (3) Try to encourage the non-custodial parent to become involved. (4) Try to reprimand the child privately instead of in front of his/her peers, if possible. (5) Try to encourage positive social relationships. (6) Try to be patient.

Milne, Ann M., (and others), Single Parents, Working Mothers and the Educational Achievement of Elementary School Age Children, Educational Resources Information Center, ED 234092, June, 1983.

Data for this study was taken in the 1976-77 academic year as part of the Sustaining Effects Study of Title I undertaken by System Development Corporation. Achievement data in reading and math for students in grades one through six was collected from 242 public schools nationwide. Achievement data was scored on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). Data was analyzed separately for blacks and whites. Results showed that scores were lower for children from one-parent homes as compared to the two-parent families. The major effect of this advantage was determined by family income. Lack of financial resources showed lower achievement scores. Mean family income in one-parent families was shown to be half of that of two-parent families. Also presented in this study were statistics that show that white and black working, single mothers showed positive effects on the academic achievement levels of children, but working mothers from two-parent families showed adverse effects.

Morse, William C. and Munger, Richard, "When Divorce Rocks a Child's World," The Educational Forum, 43 (1979): 429-433.

A "case study" was chosen as the method of research to discover how a child of divorce reacts to various situations in the classroom. Cindy, a student in a middle-class elementary school, was selected for observation by the authors as they watched her reactions to a range of experiences. The authors were serving as consultants in an open classroom which made observation possible. Morse and Munger found Cindy to have a variety of school problems related to her parents' divorce. First, they found Cindy to be consumed with a fear of separation from her mother. During one school play she went around to the other children asking what they would do if their mothers and fathers were not at home when they got there. Secondly, she was lethargic toward her entire school experience. She had a difficult time getting interested in school work and seemed listless. She also became more reliant on other girls who also were uninterested in school but who gave her emotional support. Thirdly, her self-image began to suffer, responding negatively to questions about herself.

NAESP Staff Report, "One-Parent Families and Their Children: The School's Most Significant Minority," Principal, 60 (1980): 31-37.

This study looked at the educational needs of children from one-parent families. The study involved 26 elementary and secondary schools in 14 states. The 26 schools were surveyed twice, once during each semester of the 1979-80 school year. For this survey the responding school officials were told to answer on the basis of information in their files. The NAESP report revealed the following: (1) One-parent children showed lower achievement in school. 38% of the one-parent children were classified as low achievers as compared to 23% of two-parent children. (2) Children from one-parent families moved in and out of a school district at twice the rate of children from two-parent families. (3) 31% of the elementary school children who were from one-parent families were tardy at least once compared with 25% of those from two-parent families. (4) One-parent children were found to be twice as likely to skip school and twice as likely to drop out of school as their counterparts from two-parent households. (5) Of those elementary students who were referred to the school office for disciplinary reasons, 16% were from one-parent homes compared to 10% from two-parent homes.

Parish, Thomas S., "Concordance of Children's Decriptions of Themselves and Their Parents as a Function of Intact Versus Divorced Families," Journal of Psychology, 107 (1981): 199-202.

Lifshitz proposed that children's self-concepts slowly evolve as a result of successive comparisons and contrasts between one's self and one's parents. Lifshitz also stated that children would gravitate toward the remaining parent and away from the absent parent in a divorce situation. To test his theory a total of 606 grade school children were asked to check 15 of 48 adjectives on multiple copies of the Personal Attributes Inventory for Children. Children were to check the adjectives that they thought were descriptive of themselves, their mothers, and their fathers. To derive concordance scores, it was necessary to note what adjectives were checked, or not checked, in common between self and father or mother. Results of this study show that concordance scores between self and mother were consistently high regardless of the family's configuration. The scores between self and fathers, however, did diminish progressively following parental divorce and then after the remaining parent's remarriage.

Parish, Thomas S. and Philip, Mary K., "The Self-Concepts of Children From Intact and Divorced Families: Can They Be Affected in School Settings?", Education, 103 (1982): 60-63.

Studies have shown that children's self-concepts can be enhanced in the school if teachers interact, are accepting, and give encouragement to them. These findings are more prevalent for those children whose needs are not too special or great because teachers are limited by time, talents, and resources. 376 3rd through 8th grade students from a Midwestern school district were asked to check 15 out of 48 adjectives on the Personal Attribute Inventory for Children that they felt best described them. 38 of these 376 students were from divorced, non-remarried families. 17 teachers received in-service instructions regarding Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, were instructed to assess their students' needs based upon the Personal Attribute Inventory, and then attempt to fulfill those needs. This was to continue for a month. At the end of this period the inventory was given a second time. This study showed that students from intact families showed higher self-concepts after teachers implemented their training skills. However, students from divorced, remarried or divorced, non-remarried families showed no increase in self-concept.

Parish, Thomas S. and Taylor, James C., "The Impact of Divorce and Subsequent Father Absence on Children's and Adolescents' Self-Concepts," Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 8 (1979): 427-433.

Lamb, Herzog, and Sudia concluded their research and found "divorce and subsequent father absence have been associated with an increased incidence of inappropriate or undesirable behavior in children and adolescents as well as with a decreased incidence of appropriate or desirable behaviors in children and adolescents." (p. 428). In light of these findings, Parish conducted a study of 406 grade school and junior high students to see if self-concepts differ when the father is present in the home as opposed to situations where the father is absent due to divorce. Students were asked to choose 15 words from a list of 24 positive and 24 negative words that best described them. Results showed that students who had experienced father-loss through divorce and whose mothers had not remarried had significantly lower self-concepts that those from non-divorced families. Children who had father-loss due to divorce but whose mothers had remarried, showed lower self-concept than children from intact families, but not as low as the group whose mothers had not remarried.

Prinz, Ronald S., Children of Separating Parents: They Are Not All Alike, Educational Resources Information Center, ED 241854, August, 1983.

Research shows that divorce can have definite negative effects on a child, but maladjustment is not always a consequence. One question asked in this study was, "Why are some children showing negative effects from divorce while others do not?" To help answer this question, a study of 46 elementary school-age children living with their mothers were assessed by teachers with no previous knowledge of the family structures. Some methods used in this study were Achenbach's Teacher Report Form of the Child's Behavior Checklist, Separation Questionnaires, Children's Attitudes Toward Parental Separation Inventory, and mother and child interviews. The results showed a high variability in the separation of parents, especially in boys. Boys whose parents engaged in less frequent negative interchange and who saw their fathers more were found to do better in school than their counterparts whose parents had more overt marital hostilities prior to separation. Boys scored lower in adaptive functioning (a composite of work habits, learning, classroom behavior, and happiness) when mothers made frequent derogatory comments about their fathers. Boys also scored lower in this area if they blamed themselves for the divorce or had a fear of abandonment.

Raschke, Helen J. and Vernon J., "Family Conflict and Children's Self-Concepts: A Comparison of Intact and Single-Parent Families," Journal of Marriage and the Familiy, 41 (1979): 367-374.

This study's purpose was to assess the effects of family conflict and family structure (i.e., intact, single-parent, reconstituted) on children's self-concepts. The population for the study consisted of students in grades three, six, and eight in the public schools of a large Southeastern city. The study consisted of 289 students. The measurement instrument used was a questionnaire which incorporated the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale. The principals and the third and sixth grade teachers involved in the study were asked to review the questionnaire and make revisions on it where they thought it was necessary. Results of the study showed that there was no significant difference in self-concept scores of children from intact, single-parent, reconstituted, or other types of families. However, self-concept scores were significantly lower for children who reported higher levels of family conflict. The authors stated that this research does not lend support to the cliche that "broken homes yield broken young lives." (p. 373)

Rubin, Lisa D. and Price, James H., "Divorce and Its Effects on Children," The Journal of School Health, 49 (1979): 552-556.

Studies have supported the theory that there is a developmental consequence of divorce. Reactions to the divorce depend upon the age and stage of development of the child. The preschool period was seen to be the most vulnerable period for children when the opposite sex parent is removed. In the early latency period (ages 5-7), children showed sadness. Poor performance and withdrawal at school is also seen in this age group. The later-latency-aged children (8-10) were usually better adjusted to the situation, but often showed shame for the disruption of their families. Headaches and stomach aches were very common in this group. The school has an enormous potential for helping children from broken homes to learn coping skills. Teachers need to work with these children with the use of role playing, fantasy, and sentence completion. The angry child also needs assistance in understanding the sources of anger. Emphasis should always be placed upon the child's self-worth and responsibility for his own behaviors. The authors stated, "Special attention, sympathy, and tolerance demonstrated by teachers can sustain children who were feeling emotionally undernourished at home." (p. 555).

Santiock, John W. and Tracy, Russel L., "Effects of Children's Family Structure Status on the Development of Stereotypes by Teachers," Journal of Educational Psychology, 70 (1978): 754-757.

The intent of this study was to see if teachers' ratings of children may indicate a stereotype on the part of the teacher which shows more positive expectations for children from intact families than from children of divorced families. The subjects were 30 undergraduate and graduate students attending the University of Texas at Dallas - either graduate students who were teachers or undergraduate students who were completing or had completed their teaching requirements. Teachers were asked to view a videotape that focused on the social interaction of an eight-year-old boy. Half of the teachers were given information sheets that indicated that he was from a divorced home and the other half had sheets stating that he was from an intact family. Teachers were then to rate the boy on a wide range of eleven personality traits and to predict what his behavior would be like in five different school situations. Results were compiled and the Bonforroni multiple-comparison procedure indicated that on the three variables - happiness, emotional adjustment, and coping with stress - teachers rated the divorced child more negatively.

Schoettle, Ulrich C. and Cantwell, Dennis P., "Children of Divorce," Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychology, 19 (1980): 453-475.

A group of 2,351 children ranging in age from two months to seventeen years was chosen by the University of California Neuro-psychiatric Institute's Child Psychiatry Department for study. The study took place during the period July, 1974 through June, 1977. The group included children from intact and divorced families. They were studied to find answers to the questions: Are children of divorce referred more frequently for psychiatric evaluation than those from intact families? and, Do children of divorce manifest unique types of psychopathology? The children were first screened by the child psychiatry social work staff and then educational psychological testing was done. A data base form was developed that included 64 possible chief complaints, signs, and symptoms categories. A summary of the data revealed that physically aggressive behavior was significantly more common for all children of divorce. Problems with behavior, social relationships, learning and school problems, and affective disturbances were also more prevalent with children of divorce.

Sciara, Frank J., Father Absence: An Overlooked Factor in the Academic Achievement of Urban Disadvantaged Children, Educational Resources Information Center, ED 150233, November, 1977.

Father absence is on the rise in urban areas with both whites and blacks experiencing it. Blacks, however, have a larger father absence rate. Sciara found that in researching others' studies on father absence that the conclusions regarding father absence was not consistent. Mackler and Wasserman found no difference in achievement when fathers were present or absent. Peterson found a positive association between achievement and intact families. Some studies showed that lower academic achievement was a result of race and not father absence. In light of this, Sciara conducted three different studies. The first one looked at reading and math scores of fourth grade black children. Results showed that children placed higher when father was present. The second one showed that children in remedial reading and math from father absent homes were over-represented in proportion to their presence in the school population. The third study took first grade reading scores from three different schools and found that with fathers in the homes, academic achievement was higher.

Snyder, Alicia Allman (and others), "Children From Broken Homes: Visits to the School Nurse," The Journal of School Health, 50 (1980): 189-194.

When a child's security is threatened or disrupted, he/she will be more prone to visit the school nurse. A study was conducted at an elementary school in a Southwestern U.S. city to see if children from broken homes do, in fact, visit the school nurse more often than students from intact families. A population of 610 students in grades K-5 was selected for the study. Data for the study was collected by the nurses' log of student visits and student enrollment cards. Six major complaints emerged within this study: (1) digestive, (2) ill-defined signs and symptoms, (3) infectious/parasitic, (4) psychosomatic, (5) respiratory, and (6) trauma. Results of this study showed that children from broken homes, especially females, make more visits to the school nurse. Also, students from broken homes showed symptoms of vomiting after breakfast and an inability to control emotions. In older children, headaches and stomach aches were related to parental conflict. The author felt that these children may require additional medical and emotional support and that "the effects of broken homes may have important implications for the physical and emotional health of today's youth." (p. 193).

Strom, Mary E., Children of Divorce in the Elementary School Classroom, Educational Resources Information Center, ED 233808, August, 1983.

Presented in this study was an annotated bibliography dealing with divorce and academic achievement, self-concept, and ways teachers can help children adjust while in the classroom. Strom pointed out that much of the research is contradictory, but most showed lower academic achievement and negative effects on social behaviors where divorce is involved. As far as self-esteem is concerned, Stom felt that more research needs to be done before too many conclusions can be drawn. Research shows that children base their self-concepts on their evaluation of the custodial parent and that living in a conflict-ridden home is worse than a home where the parents are divorced. Schools can help children from one-parent homes by being sensitive to their needs and being alert to problems. Accurate record-keeping and communications must be maintained. Teachers should be involved in in-service training to know how to best serve the members of a one-parent family.

DIAGNOSIS OF AND STATEGIES FOR ALLEVIATING THE NEGATIVE SYMPTOMS OF DIVORCE

Allers, Robert D., "Helping Children Understand Divorce," Today's Education, 69-70 (1980): 26, 28-29.

Allers gave a list of symptoms for which a teacher should watch. Some of the signs of stress identified were: (1) absent-mindedness, staring out of the window or turning in work only partially completed; (2) nervousness, biting of fingernails or fidgeting; (3) weariness and indications of a lack of sleep; (4) sudden mood swings; (5) withdrawal by stopping participation in class activities; (6) declining grades; (7) acting out - suddenly becoming restless and aggressive; and (8) no change. Some children may show no signs of stress but may very well be confused and frustrated internally. Allers then gave some strategies for helping children of divorced parents. He felt that planning a discussion on divorce for all students was beneficial. This helps children of divorced parents know that they are not alone and it helps children whose parents are not divorced to understand a little of the trauma that their classmates are going through. This help foster understanding. Teachers should also make themselves available to talk with the child about his/her feelings. Literature about divorce should be kept in the classroom for students to read.

Bernstein, Joanne E., Helping Young Children Cope with Separation: A Bibliotherapeutic Approach, Educational Resources Information Center, ED 170695, February, 1978.

Books are a good way for children to come to terms with a loss. The loss can be anything from death or divorce to starting a new school year with a new teacher. Dr. Shodes stated that readers can "engage his emotions and free them for conscious and productive use." (p. 8) In recent years numerous books have been printed dealing with divorce and separation. These books give the young reader a chance to identify with others who are going through the same problems. It also allows acceptance from a distance. Privacy of reading is also an advantage. Books help children realize that they are not alone in their particular situation and this makes them feel less isolated and embarrassed. Books give new insights into problems and give the child the language which he can use to communicate pain. In using the bibliotherapeutic approach, timing is important. Books cannot be forced upon any child. Teachers can help attract the students to read by decorating bulletin boards to include some of the books the teacher wants to be read. After a child has read one of the selected books, adults must be available for discussion, but only if the child chooses to talk.

Brown, Frank B., "A Study of the School Needs of Children From One-Parent Families," Phi Delta Kappan, 61 (1980): 537-540.

Brown quoted E. Mavis Hetherington, a fellow at the Center for Advance Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, California: "There is a greater probability of problems in school occurring with children from single-parent families. The achievement test scores and grades in school of children being reared in single-parent families tend to be lower than those of children living with two parents." (p. 537) In a study conducted by the Kettering Foundation and the National Association of Elementary School Principals dealing with single- versus two-parent families, the following results were noted: the child from a one-parent family had more discipline problems, suspensions, truancy, student mobility, tardiness, and the percentages of children in the Title I program was disproportionately high. Brown stated that the schools must face the problem of dealing with single-parent children. Some ways are: (1) updating school records; (2) revision of calendars to ensure that parents have access to school personnel and activities; (3) revisions of curriculum; and (4) offering of adult education programs to provide information on better parenting.

Campbell, Lloyd P. and Miller, Karen, "Children From Divorced Homes: The Message for Classroom Teachers," American Secondary Education, 12 (1982): 25-26.

Teachers must be knowledgable about the symptoms of change in behavior that children of divorce may experience. Some symptoms are: absent-mindedness, nervousness, moodiness, declining grades, and weariness. The authors stated that "the effects of divorce on children often elicit severe emotional trauma, with a deep sense of loss, a feeling of vulnerability to forces beyond their control, a conflict of loyalties, a lifestyle modified by financial straits, removal from familiar surroundings, custody battles, temporary neglect by troubled parents, jealousy toward parents' new sexual partners, problems with step-parents, and occasionally kidnapping." (p. 25) A teacher can come to the aid of a troubled child at this time by keeping the lines of communication open, by not expecting failure, by avoiding an emphasis on the stereotyped family, and by not avoiding the subject of divorce when it is brought up. The authors also stated that a teacher cannot always handle the situation of helping these children adjust. It is very important for a teacher to know when to refer a child to some other professional for help.

Clay Falk, Phyllis L., "One Out of Five and Largely Ignored," The National Elementary Principal, 59 (1979): 76-80.

The National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) was concerned about the problems of single parents when they try to deal with the schools. Single parents were complaining that communication with the school was very difficult. The NCCE began developing a questionnaire that attempted to answer the question, "What do children from one-parent families and their families need from the schools?" A grant was given by the Ittleson Foundation to establish the "Single Parents and the Public Schools Project" in order to find out what is needed in the way of improving the school and one-parent family relationship. The NCCE's project will find out what is happening in the school by documenting existing programs and policies so other schools will see what their colleagues are doing in behalf of the one-parent family. The NCCE will find out what is needed by having parents complete these questionnaires concerning their needs.

Cook, Alicia S. and McBride, Jean, "Divorce: Helping Children Cope," School Counselor, 30 (1982): 89-93.

The authors stated that stress from crisis events place stress on individuals that exceed their ability to handle them with normal resources. There are over one million children who are involved in their parents' divorce each year resulting in tremendous stress on them. During the divorce process children may cry more frequently, show signs of trembling, restlessness, nausea, diarrhea, and irrational fears. Research has shown that school performance often suffers and changes in school behavior are noticed. This article gave several suggestions for teachers to follow in dealing with children of divorced parents. First, teachers must deal with these children with patience and consistency, but must be careful not to be too overprotective. Teachers should always set reasonable limits on the child's behavior. Second, it is important to have classroom activities that will allow for recognition and expression of the child's emotions. Books were cited as an example of very useful tools for accomplishing this. Other methods for expressing emotions are such activities as puppet shows, dramatic play, and painting. Teachers can help students cope with the negative effect of divorce and perhaps make it a growth experience for the child.

Damon, Parker, "When the Family Comes Apart: What Schools Can Do," The National Elementary Principal, 59 (1979): 66-75.

This article gave a number of suggestions for ways in which schools might deal more effectively with children who come from divorced families. One important thing that the school must do is to keep track of children who are involved in a divorce. Schools need to know who has custody and who to contact in case of an emergency. Teachers should make sure that they schedule meetings when the parent or parents can attend and then provide the non-custodial parent with important information. It should not be assumed that children from divorced families will have difficulty in school, but if they do, support should be provided. Teachers should also be alert to personality and behavior changes due to visiting the non-custodial parent. A new environment and unaccustomed emotional stress can cause much anxiety in a child. Seeking support and information from colleagues and parents will help the teacher cope more effectively with these children. Teachers should provide time to talk with students about separation and divorce. General discussions can help all students understand one another. Providing the student with lots of positive comments and opportunities to excel will help the child from divorced parents feel good about him/herself.

Drake, Ellen A., "Helping the School Cope With Children of Divorce," Journal of Divorce, 3 (1979): 69-75.

Children of divorce may not manifest problems at home, but may, indeed manifest a number of problems in the school setting. Because of this, Drake felt that teachers and all school personnel who come into contact with the student must be aware of problems to know how to intervene, if need be. In order to establish appropriate interventions, Kelly and Wallerstein developed a divorce-specific assessment which can be adapted to the school. The assessment made three recommendations: (1) A brief history of developmental achievement where detailed information on the child's academic and behavioral functioning as reported by school personnel and observation of the child should be documented. (2) New symptoms, defensive and coping strategies, and affective responses to the divorce should be monitored. (3) There must be a determination that a support system will be available to the child. Once the assessment process is completed, then either a direct approach to intervention, such as expressing feelings through literature or group discussions; or an indirect approach, such as understanding, tolerance, special attention, and sympathy by school personnel should be implemented.

"Excerpts from the Ditchley Proceedings: A Response to Robert Weiss," The National Elementary Principal, 59 (1979): 27-30.

Mr. Weiss and others were asked a number of questions regarding children from one-parent families and those from two-parent families. Weiss stated that literature would have us to believe that children do less well in one-parent situations as far as cognitive development. However, he feels that children in one-parent families do "differently." (p. 29) They are more aware of adult issues. Bramall stated that schools have to understand and make allowances for children from a one-parent family. Schools should help provide someone for these chidren to whom they can talk about their situations. The biggest problem the school has in regard to the divorced family is that the schools are not informed of the new situation and they must, therefore, pick up this information by chance. Bramall also asserted that because of this ignorance schools tend to be very insensitive to the one-parent child. Teachers should be very careful not to gear all activities and discussions around the two-parent family concept. It was also felt that many behavior problems of these children are a result of society's expectations of how the child is going to behave because he/she is from a one-parent family.

Freeland, Kent and Whitfield, Edie L., "Divorce and Children: What Teachers Can Do," Childhood Education, 58 (1981): 88-89.

The authors stated that divorce is a fact of life and that teachers must help the child accept the reality of it by an attitude approach to teaching and through a curriculum of planned activities to help foster positive self-images. Some suggestions for the attitude approach are: (1) When studying family units, recognize many different kinds of families. (2) On bulletin boards depicting different phases of lifestyles, include females, as well as males, in the "breadwinning roles." (3) Accept different lifestyles and customs that children represent. (4) Focus projects on the family instead of just mother and father. (5) Plan a "Visitors Day" instead of a "Parent Visitation Day." Some of the planned activities within the curriculum can include: (1) role-modeling activities that help children identify with different lifestyles and situations; (2) creative writing assignments that will enable the students to replace old stereotyped story situations with different patterns, i.e., rewrite "The Three Bears" with a mother bear and two school-aged cubs; (3) have students study different periods of history and have them make some comparisons with things like the divorce rate or lifestyles.

Garanzini, Michael J., "Recognizing and Responding to the Child of Divorce," Momentum, 15 (1984): 8-12.

Researchers have discovered that there is a fairly consistent behavior pattern with children from divorced parents, depending on the age of the child. The preschooler is the "anxious child." Teachers working with preschoolers must reassure the child that he or she will be there to take care of the child. The early latency child is considered the "sad child." Since children will support one another and help each other identify feelings, the school is one of the best places for handling these feelings. The teacher can be of great service by helping the child name and describe the emotions they feel. The late latency child is called the "angry child." Anger may be revealed in unruly conduct, inability to concentrate, intolerance, etc. Teachers can help this child by not stigmatizing the child as bad or disobedient. The adolescent must be viewed as the "vulnerable child." This child is vulnerable to serious attacks of depression. Teachers can help this child by being willing to discuss the divorce with the child and suggesting the child talk to a counselor.

Garvin, James P., "Children of Divorce - A Challenge for Middle School Teachers," Middle School Journal, 16 (1984): 6-7.

Some common behavior changes resulting from divorce are: absent-mindedness, nervousness, extreme moodiness, psychosomatic problems, and lack of confidence to perform tasks. Some develop positive attitudes, however, such as skills in managing conflicts and character traits of independence and resilience. Garvin listed several suggestions for teachers to follow in order to help these children cope. (1) Teachers must show support and understanding. They must be willing to discuss the divorce if the child wishes. (2) Teachers should try to keep in contact with the divorced parents and try to encourage both to keep interested in their child's education. (3) Do not use stereotyped vocabulary in front of the child, i.e., "fatherless," "broken home." (4) Try to select literature that will help the child understand and cope with problems. (5) Change the typical curriculum so as to recognize children from single parent families. (6) Encourage involvement in out of class activities.

Hammond, Janice M., "Children, Divorce and You," Learning, 9 (1981): 83, 84-88, 89.

Hammond gave eight strategies that teachers can implement. These strategies are: (1) Do not expect failure from children whose parents are divorced. Teachers' expectations of their students critically influence their actual achievement. (2) Be sensitive to the language used. Do not use phrases such as "broken home" and be sure that textbooks do not use traditional stereotyping. (3) Let students talk about their feelings. Teachers should let students know they are willing to listen to problems. (4) Take advantage of social studies units on the family to discuss divorce and single-parent families. (5) Make books about divorce available to students. (6) Establish communication with parents. Make sure parents know of the interest in working with them for their children's benefit. (7) Learn about the custodial arrangements for children of divorced parents. Know who has the child at what times. (8) Do not shut out the non-custodial parent. Keep the non-custodial parent informed of his/her child's school activities as much as possible.

Holzman, Terry, "Schools Can Provide Help for the Children of Divorce," The American School Board Journal, 171 (1984): 46-47.

Newton, Massachusetts started a group called the Ad-Hoc Committee on Separation and Divorce. Programs have evolved in the Newton schools because of the committee. Various support groups were set up in the schools. Small groups of children from divorced families meet during their lunch hour or after school to discuss some of their problems. Groups are led by trained counselors and the main reason for the groups are to develop positive self-images. Courses are also offered in the Jr. and Sr. High Schools based on "life issues." Classes discuss how to prevent divorce and separation. The Ad-Hoc Committee also provides a two-hour workshop for teachers. Here teachers are instructed as to what kinds of help are available to them and ways specific programs work. Dr. Maurice Vanderpol, director of the McLean Institute for School Consultation stated, "The questions of whether schools should get involved is, in a word, irrelevant. Children bring their emotions into the classroom, and the schools must respond." (p. 47).

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, "Mama (or Daddy) Doesn't Live Here Anymore," Teacher, 98 (1981): 24-25.

This article gave a list of children's books that will help children of divorce realize that they are not going through this experience alone. Several books that help children deal with the situation of seeing only one parent on weekends are: Two Places to Sleep, by Joan Schuchman, a story that helps the child realize that they are loved even though the parents are not in love with each other; Daddy, by Jeanette Cains, showing the closeness between a father and daughter even though they spend only Saturdays together; and If You Listen, a story of a little girl who wonders if her father still loves her because he lives so far away. Several nonfiction books have been written to help children with the day-to-day coping of separation and divorce: A Divorce Dictionary, by Stuart M. Glass, an alphabetically arranged volume of definitions and terms associated with divorce; Surviving Your Parents' Divorce, by Charles Boeckman, a book dealing with the upsetting feelings that children have before, during, and after a divorce. Hopkins asserted that these books can help make the adjustment of a single-parent child easier and can also help the teacher to become an empathetic listener and guide.

Kelly, Joan B., "Myths and Realities for Children of Divorce," Educational Horizons, 59-60 (1980): 34-39.

Kelly stated that educators must understand what responses a child will experience beause of a breakup in the family structure. The author listed a number of myths and assumptions that are made in a divorce situation. She asserted that teachers must look beyond these myths in order to best meet the needs of these children. The myths cited by Kelly were: (1) Divorced parents are better for a child than parents who remain in an unhappy marriage. (2) Children anticipate divorce. (3) Children, hurt by the unhappy marriage of their parents, are relieved when parents decide to divorce. (4) Turmoil ends with the separation. (5) Parents divorce in the best interest of the children. (6) Children of divorce live in "single-parent families." (7) Divorce is damaging to children. In conclusion, Kelly stated, "Myths and assumptions set aside, the reality of the divorce experience for children and adolescents is that they endure a prolonged and, often, difficult period of transition, during which multiple changes and new complexities directly affect their well-being." (p. 38) If teachers understand some of these difficulties and dismiss as myth the attitudes cited, he/she will be able to help in the divorce adjustment.

Kohn, Sherwood Davidson, "Coping with Family Change," Principal, 59 (1979): 40-50.

This article reported on the work of Robert S. Weiss. For the previous 16 years Weiss had been studying one-parent families. He maintained that many times the schools do not know how to react appropriately to a child's distress symptoms. In one of Weiss's studies a first grade boy's parents broke up. He was so upset that he became withdrawn. After the divorce his mother moved and he was evaluated in a new school. It was decided that he would have to take first grade over again. Being the largest child in the class and retained, he was called stupid by his peers and, as a result, he decided he was stupid and withdrew even more. Several suggestions that Weiss offered to help children from divorced parents are: (1) instead of counseling groups during the school year, the schools should offer year-round programs that children can enter at any time; (2) schools should also consider staying open late so that children will be supervised while one parent works; (3) parents should also be made aware of the fact that the school needs to know whenever there is a change in the family's composition; and (4) teachers must make sure their readers do not have the "Mom-Dad-Dick and Jane" family stereotype.

Ourth, John, "Children in One-Parent Homes: The School Factor," Principal, 60 (1980): 40.

Ourth felt that separation and divorce can be the most major crisis a child can face. He said, "As educators, we agree that the school's primary function is instruction, but we also know that a child who is in crisis cannot learn until school personnel recognize the crisis and take steps to ameliorate its effects." The most important way to do this, according to Ourth, is to reexamine our own attitudes. If teachers attach a stigma to separation and divorce, it will come across to the children. Teachers must also expect the best and not the worst from children who are going through this crisis. Teachers must be able to recognize signs of stress in a child and be ready to help them in any they can. Even though the school cannot take the place of the parents, it can and should be a support system for the family to fall back on. "I have found that when a child's home family changes, the school family may well become - at least temporarily - an important source of continuity."

Ourth, John and Zakariya, Sally Banks, "The School and the Single-Parent Student: What Schools Can Do to Help," Principal, 62 (1982): 24-38.

One way the school can find the cause of problems when a child shows signs of stress is to keep accurate, updated records on each child to keep teachers apprised of changes in the family status. Schools must also be sensitive to the child's stress in time of divorce, while continuing to expect these children to perform well in school. Schools can help by scheduling school events during parents' non-working hours, setting up special funds for the little extras that a parent may then not be able to afford, and perhaps setting up a parents' resource center and child care so parents can get involved in school events. Teachers should be alert to signs of distress, such as withdrawal, aggression, daydreaming, and difficulty in concentrating in their students. If teachers see these signs, they should try to encourage students to discuss what is worrying them. Another way to help younger children is to have older children of divorced families act as tutors, helping them with homework, but also sharing experiences. This will help give younger students emotional support and, hopefully, prevent achievement drops and behavior problems.

Palker, Patricia, "How to Deal With the Single-Parent Child in the Classroom," Teacher, 98 (1980): 51-54.

The author talked to researchers, single parents, teachers, and single-parent children and found that children from single-parent homes needed teachers to recognize that even though they do not fit the traditional family mold, they still had a family. Teachers need to recognize signals that a child is going through a difficult time and know how to deal with it. Some of the trouble signs can be misbehavior, social withdrawal, and crying easily. The results of the Wallerstein and Kelly study conducted in Marin County, California using a sample of 60 families, showed that preschool children typically reacted with denial and felt that they were, in some degree, responsible for the divorce. Seven- and eight-year-olds were very sad, and nine- and ten-year-olds felt shame and anger. The author gave some guidelines for helping the single-parent children in the classroom. (1) Avoid assuming that all children have two parents. (2) Look for behavior changes. (3) Encourage both parents to continue their interest in their child's education. (4) Read books that have been written on children of divorce. (5) Encourage depressed, withdrawn children to get involved in after-school activities.

Randall, Kay L., The Single-Parent Child in the Classroom, Educational Resources Information Center, ED 204027, June, 1981.

Randall gave an annotated bibliography dealing with the subject of divorce. She listed research studies dealing with the area of problems associated with single parents. Randall also pointed out findings of research that the child is negatively affected by divorce and these negative affects are carried into the classroom in the form of lower achievement, higher rates of truancy, more suspension and expulsions, higher drop-out rates, and more discipline problems. Randall gave some helps and guidelines that teachers and schools could appropriate to help deal with single-parent children. Teachers should be supportive of these students, being careful not to stereotype them into any mold, expecting the worst simply because they are presently living with one parent. Schools should keep accurate records on single-parent children. Additionally, schools should sponsor workshops for teachers to better enable them to deal with the problems some of these students may experience. Better communication needs to be obtained by arranging schedules of extracurricular activities and conferences.

Ricci, Isolina, "Divorce, Remarriage, and the Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, 60 (1979): 509-511.

Because four out of every ten children born in this decade will live with only one parent for some part of their life, the schools have a responsibility to relate knowledgeably to new family situations. One major problem the schools face, however, is not having adequate information on students. Schools need more information from the noncustodial parent as well as the custodial parent. The author suggested that educators advise parents that the schools can better serve them if they let the school know who they are and what they want. School districts should try to update their registration forms in order to gather more information about both parents. Schools should also duplicate report cards and school calendars for the "second" home. Even though a parent does not have legal custody, most of them are still interested in their child's education and can provide emotional support for them. The author also gave other suggestions to help reduce what she called the "school/family credibility gap." Be sure that textbooks do not all portray the never-divorced family. Have alternatives to the Mother's Day and Father's Day presents. And, make sure that tickets issued for special school events include more than one set of parents.

Sonnenstein-Schneider, Mary and Baird, Kay L., "Group Counseling Children of Divorce in the Elementary Schools: Understanding Process and Technique," The Personnel and Guidance Journal, 59 (1980): 88-91.

This article focused on the processes and techniques of group counseling for children of divorce in elementary schools. Group counseling lets students interact with peers, sharing common needs and life experiences. This sharing time with peers helps to foster acceptance. The authors gave a list of suggestions to help those leading groups to stimulate discussions. Students can draw "Family Life" pictures. Here pictures of the family are drawn with a space left for the absent parent. Brainstorming in combination with role-playing and role-reversal can also be used to start discussions. When a group member expresses a problem, the group then brainstorms as many possible solutions as they can. When a possible solution is decided upon, role-playing of the solution takes place. Other aids to help stimulate discussion are books, slides, tapes, movies, and use of puppets. Two books that were highly recommended by the authors are: Two Homes to Live In: A Child's Eye View of Divorce by Barbara Shook, and How Does It Feel When Your Parents Get Divorced? by Terry Berger.

SUMMARY

That the effects of divorce will be felt in the classroom goes without saying. However, the results of research intended to define those effects are not unanimous in the conclusions to be drawn. Kelly and Wallerstein, often cited in other researchers' reports, found that two-thirds of all the children of divorce who were the subjects of their study showed notable negative changes in school performance following their parents' separation. Black's study confirmed this in that she found a greater intensity of problems in children from divorced or separated families.

Doering, on the other hand, while observing a general lowering in all areas of his subjects' school performance, noted that parent/child relationships are sometimes enhanced when marital strife is ended by the divorce. He also pointed out that other studies showed no difference in achievement levels between children from divorced families and those from intact families. Hammond, in her study, found no significant difference in self-concept, math and reading achievement, immaturity or withdrawal. DiSilvio made mention of the sometimes contradictory findings of the various research reports. While the majority of the researchers did find measurable negative effects of divorce upon children, it is obvious that more research in this area is needed.

One of the negative effects observed in researchers' reports was in the area of academic performance. The NAESP Staff Report noted that 38% of one-parent children were classified as low achievers compared to 23% of two-parent children. Drake, in a case study, observed a dramatic decline in SRA Achievement Series Skills scores one year after the divorce of the child's parents followed by improvement in the following years. Guidubaldi observed lower IQ, reading, and spelling scores among children of divorce. Sciara was more specific in the conclusions which he drew from his research. He maintained that it was father absence, a general result of divorce, which lowered academic perfomance. He found that children in remedial reading and math classes from father absent homes were over-represented in proportion to their presence in the school population. Courtney and Schell corroborated that finding. Most researchers made note, at least in a general way, of lowered academic performance among children from divorced and single-parent families.

Another negative effect observed by researchers was poorer classroom behavior. Schoettle and Cantwell found that problems with behavior, social relationships, learning and school problems, and affective disturbances were more prevalent with children of divorce. The NAESP Staff Report revealed that children from one-parent homes were half again as likely to be referred to the school office for disciplinary reasons. Evans and Neel, using a Statistical

Package for Social Sciences discriminant analysis, reported that in 25 of 29 measures of school behavior, one-parent children adversely deviated from the norm as compared to children from two-parent families. Lindholm and Toriliatos, in a study comparing behavior of children from all types of family configurations, found that the most problems attended children from a "mothers only" home and the least problems were observed in children from intact families, with other types of configurations represented between those two extremes.

Changes in self-concept was a major concern of much of the research that has been done. Parish and Taylor found in their study, that children who had suffered father loss through divorce and whose mothers had not remarried showed lower self-concept than those whose mothers had remarried, and they, in turn, were found to have lower self-concepts than children from intact families. Rubin and Price concurred in that finding and further delineated age of the child at the time of the divorce as a factor in determining the extent of lowering of self-concept. Raschke and Raschke, on the other hand, concluded from their study that there was no significant difference in self-concept scores between children from single-parent, reconstituted, or intact families. They did note, however, that higher levels of family conflict did negatively affect self-concept scores.

Some of the research pinpointed more specific reasons for the lowered self-concepts that were found. Again, father

absence was found to be a significant factor by Parish (1981). Suggested as a possible reason for lowered self-concept is the tendency of teachers to stereotype children of divorce, thus stigmatizing them. Santiock and Tracy documented this tendency in their study. Reinforcing the stereotyped image is the literature found in the curriculum. Kealey studied six basal reading series to investigate the image of the family presented. He found only one story of 136 dealing with the family that specifically stated that one of the child's parents did not live at home. He maintained that this sends a strong signal to the child of divorce that they are different if not outright inferior.

Physical complaints were also found to be an effect of divorce. Snyder found that children of divorce, especially females, made more visits to the school nurse than was true of the general school population. In her study, the list of complaints that she presented were those that can be induced by stress.

Additionally, an NAESP Staff Report pointed to the greater mobility found among children whose parents were divorced. This presented the problem of moving from school to school, thus eliminating for the child the sense of security and permanency found in remaining in one place for an extended period of time. Also, the report showed greater truancy and drop- out rates for children of divorce.

Researchers were not unanimous in their conclusions because several variables are involved. Kelly and

Wallerstein, in their monumental five-year longitudinal study, found that the younger the child when the parents divorced, the more negative the impact upon the child. Hetherington and Garanzini cited Kelly and Wallerstein's research in their own reports on this variable. Hetherington, further, noted that divorce was more stressful for boys than girls. Rubin and Price's research concurred in those conclusions. But Guidubaldi's findings were the reverse, i.e., the younger the child, the better the adjustment.

Another variable which appeared to be determinative of the extent to which negative symptoms are realized is the amount of parental hostility evident between the parents. Prinz found that in divorce situations in which the parents engaged in less frequent negative interchange and the father was seen more frequently, boys were found to do better in school than their counterparts whose parents had more overt marital hostilities. Strom also found that the conflict-ridden home resulted in lower self-concepts in the children of that home, a finding which was also reported by Raschke and Raschke.

The amount of family income was also another variable which seemed to influence the adjustment of children to the divorce. Milne reported that the mean family income in one-parent homes was half that of two-parent homes. However, she found that working, single mothers had positive effects on the academic achievement of their children, whereas the

opposite effect was seen in the case of working mothers in a two-parent home. DiSilvio called for more investigation into the effects of other variables in the divorce situation, such as family income, sex of the child, etc.

Since the vast majority of research indicates that there will be some negative impact upon the child when a divorce takes place, it is only logical that the teacher in the classroom will need to be prepared to deal with the effects. Therefore, it is imperative that the teacher's diagnostic skills be honed to recognize the symptoms of this trauma as they appear in his/her students and then implement whatever strategies are feasible for mitigating the negative effects of such an event upon the child's education.

Allers presented a list of symptoms of stress from divorce for which the teacher should watch. Drake encouraged a continued monitoring of symptoms. Garanzini categorized symptoms by age level. The list of physical complaints given by Snyder would alert the teacher to potential family crisis when they are observed in the student.

The strategies for helping the child of divorce which have been suggested by researchers in this field can be divided into two areas: (1) those involving policy and procedure under the purview of school administrations, and (2) those to be implemented by the teacher in the classroom. Some of the strategies can be very easily implemented while others may be quite costly and cumbersome, given budget and manpower constraints.

Brown encouraged schools to keep updated student records so that school personnel can be apprised of changes in the family status. Randall concurred in this recommendation. Brown also advised the offering of adult education courses on better parenting.

Randall called for school systems to offer workshops for teachers to educate them on the effects of divorce upon their students. Holzman reported on the Newton, Massachusetts school district where such workshops have been effected.

Kohn recommended that schools become more involved in the post-divorce adjustment process by the schools maintaining an extended school day to aid single, working mothers. She also advised the sponsoring of year-round counseling groups to aid the children of divorce. Ourth and Zakariya suggested the feasibility of pairing younger children of divorce with older children who had previously gone through the experience and would serve as tutors and give emotional support to the younger children. Ourth (1980) felt that the schools are a natural support system for children facing divorce and should be used as such. Ricci recommended that, in order to keep both the custodial and noncustodial parent involved in the child's education, report cards and school calendars should be duplicated and given to each parent.

Allers, Damon, and Sonnenstein-Schneider all suggested that teachers plan class discussions on divorce, separation, and various family types. Sonnenstein-Schneider also

encouraged the use of films, books, tapes, and other media to accomplish student awareness of various lifestyles. Garvin, as well as Allers recommended keeping literature on the subject of divorce in the classroom to be available for student reading.

It was suggested that books could have another use as a coping strategy. Bernstein advocated bibliotherapy, the use of books to elicit emotional responses that legitimize the child's feelings about his/her parent's divorce. This is a healing strategy in which the teacher serves as a guide.

A common recommendation among the researchers was avoidance of stereotyping children of divorce and avoidance of stereotypical language, such as "broken home." Hammond called for greater sensitivity in the language used. Randall also noted that teachers tend to stereotype children of divorce and lower their expectations of student performance, treating them accordingly.

Clay Falk observed that single-parents find it particularly frustrating in communicating with school personnel. Consequently, lines of communication should be open. Palker agreed and suggested that the teacher attempt to keep both parents informed and involved in the child's education.

Finally, the teacher has the opportunity to enhance the self-concept of the child of divorce. Cook and McBride encouraged the use of activities that will allow the recognition and expression of emotions that the student is

teacher orchestrate opportunities for the individual child of divorce to excel and, thus, regain feelings of self-worth that might have been lost in the trauma of divorce. Palker called on teachers to encourage the children of divorce to become active in after school activities to prevent withdrawal.

CONCLUSION

If the research in the area of the effects of divorce upon children is unanimous on any point, it is that each child is an individual who will react in some way(s) differently from all other children who have gone through or are going through the divorce experience. Given the complexity of the makeup of a child's personality, no prediction of the effects of divorce upon the child can be anything approaching 100% in its accuracy. But there is a consistency in the pattern of research results the knowledge of which must be integrated into the school teacher's training to help them meet the variety of challenges that will arise as a result of divorce touching the lives of their students.

The research that has thus far been done in this area overwhelmingly suggests that negative effects will be felt by children whose parents divorce. The effects have been seen in all facets of the educational process; lowered academic

achievement, poorer classroom behavior, and lowered self-concepts. Because the teacher is unable to keep abreast of what is transpiring in a student's home-setting, he/she should be alert to those symptoms which indicate that conflict may be present in the home.

Once detected, the teacher is in a unique position to render invaluable assistance to the child in dealing with the trauma of marital separation. The teacher in the role of a diagnostician and therapist is not an unrealistic expectation of the teacher. The teacher is able to observe the child for up to as much as seven or eight hours a day, five days a week. The probability exists that the teacher is with the child for a longer portion of the child's day than any other single person. So it is only natural that the teacher should be trained to analyze behavior over that extended period.

Further, the teacher, because of the closeness with which he/she works with a child over that period of time, is a natural resource of help and guidance for the child. Various strategies available to the teacher for helping a child cope with divorce trauma are abundantly available and should be employed as the teaching professional deems it necessary. Awareness of and experience with symptoms of divorce in students will enable the creative teacher to refine these strategies or develope new ones to meet ever-changing situations.

While more research needs to be done in this area, there are sufficient results from extant research to indicate the

strategic role that the teacher plays in helping children to cope with this type of change in their home. Some policies administratively inaugurated may help, but the teacher in the classroom is, far and away, the most significant factor in the schools' attempts to help these children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Teachers be provided with periodic training relative to the effects of marital separation upon children and strategies for dealing with the effects as seen in the classroom.
2. Classrooms be supplied with literature dealing with children and divorce to offer the student a means of legitimizing their feelings concerning their parents' divorce.
3. Teachers incorporate into the curriculum discussions of various family configurations and discussions of marital separation and the feelings it engenders.
4. Schools solicit information from home that would indicate a change in the family configuration so that accurate student records may be maintained.
5. Report cards, school calendars, etc. be duplicated and sent to the non-custodial parent as well as the custodial parent to encourage continued interest and involvement in the child's educational progress.
6. Teachers appraise their own attitudes to check the tendency to stereotype children from one-parent homes and the tendency to expect lowered achievements.

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STUDENT QUALIFICATIONS

I. Personal Data.

A. Diane M. Barrington, 830 E. Oakside, South Bend, Indiana, 46614.

B. B.S. in Elementary Education, Indiana University at South Bend, Indiana, 1980.

C. Directed "Mothers Day Out" pre-school nursery for the Donmoyer Avenue Church of Christ, South Bend, Indiana, 1977-80.

D. Taught Sixth Grade at the LaVille Elementary School, Union-North United School Corporation, 1981-present.

E. As a teacher, I have dealt first hand with some of the effects of divorce upon children and have observed its adverse results in classroom performance.

II. Reasons for Interest.

A. Having observed the effects of divorce in the classroom for several years, I have a great desire to discover strategies for dealing more effectively with childre who have gone through or are going through the divorce experience.

B. I find that Allers says what I feel when he writes that teacher should "take time to learn more about divorce. The more teachers know about divorce, the more effective they will be in aiding their pupils. Time spent looking for books and articles about divorce is a good investment." (p. 29).